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Homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

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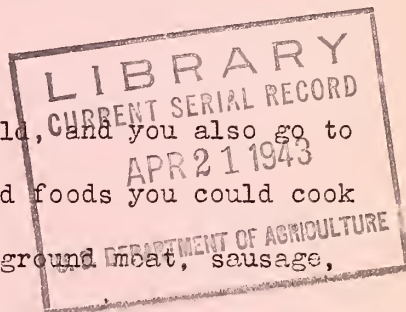
Subject: "MEALS FOR TWO WHEN MEATS ARE SCARCE." Information from home economists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Free publications--"99 Ways to Share the Meat" and "Cheese in Your Meals."

--ooOoo--

If you're a homemaker in a two-person household, and you also go to work every day, you have had to plan your meals around foods you could cook quickly and buy in small quantities. Steaks, chops, ground meat, sausage, and possibly sliced ham have been your standbys. Now most of these meats are restricted. You're at a loss what to buy. Perhaps you'd like some suggestions for attractive main dishes that you can still buy in two-person quantities, and that will not take too long to prepare after working all day.

The Home economists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture suggest a number of foods that will be useful to you just now. You may need to learn how to cook some new dishes, or even change your system of getting a meal to some extent. That is, cook the main dish partly or wholly the night before you intend to serve it. But for most of the foods the home economists suggest you can do just as you have always done...buy enough for one or two meals... and cook in a short time.

Have you seen the new leaflet issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture called "99 Ways to Share the Meat"? It's free for the asking. Write to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., for a copy. One suggestion that fits your problem is this: "Get acquainted with the variety meats." At present these are not restricted, though they may be later. Many of them are small in size or sold in small quantities to suit the buyer. Most of them are tender...and therefore quickly cooked...and all of them are high in food value. You can buy 2 serving size pieces of any kind of liver, for example....or 4



little lamb kidneys....2 apiece for a dinner meat...1 or 2 small calf hearts...
..a pair of sweetbreads....or a set of brains.

A veal kidney serves two people almost too liberally. You would probably have a little over to use another day. A beef kidney, a beef heart or a calf tongue would do for 2 dinners for 2 people, especially when served with plenty of vegetables. Beef kidney, beef heart and tongue take rather long, slow cooking. But you can get around that difficulty by cooking these meats during the evening before you intend to serve them. Start them at the same time as the dinner for that evening and then let them go on simmering while you eat and clean up...or maybe a little longer. Long slow cooking makes the less tender cuts delicious, and they take very little attention as they cook. Of course, you keep them in the refrigerator when they have cooled. Next day all you need to do is to reheat them thoroughly.

But let's go back to the quick-cooked dishes. Perhaps you have overlooked some of the possibilities of fish and shellfish. Buy local varieties of both when you can...and don't be shy about trying new kinds. You can bake, boil, or fry almost any ordinary fresh fish, and some you can broil. Be sure to cook fish at moderate heat, except for pan frying, when you protect the delicate flesh of the fish with a coating of egg and crumbs. Then brown the outside and continue cooking slowly. And here's a tip on "boiled" fish, so-called. You don't really boil it, you simmer it. And to hold the flesh together in the water, wrap the fish in a piece of clean cheesecloth.

If you have any cooked fish left over you can pick it from the bones and use for a second dinner...in patty cakes, scalloped dished, croquettes, chowders or salads. Make it go farther with rice, mashed potatoes or spaghetti, and a well-seasoned white sauce. This also goes for fish like shrimp and crab meat, which you can often buy already cooked. Oysters and clams are fine in stews,

chowders, chopped in fritters or baked in scalloped dishes.

Cheese is another possibility for good main dishes that you can make any size you like. By the way, there's a new Government folder on ways to cook cheese, with recipes for such good things as cheese fondue, Welsh rabbit, and cheese toast. You might ask for the cheese folder when you write to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the one on "99 Ways to Share the Meat".

Then it's possible to make eggs your main dish for dinner...have cereals for breakfast if you don't want eggs more than once a day. For example, hard-cooked eggs, mixed with macaroni and cheese sauce, make a substantial, tasty, and quickly prepared main dish. Serve it with a green or yellow vegetable, or a mixed raw vegetable salad and a fruit dessert.

Peanuts and other nuts, including peanut butter, also "stand in" for meats in many dishes described in that leaflet, "99 Ways to Share the Meat." Peanuts and also dried beans, peas, and soybeans, are good alternates for meat to use now. Dried beans and peas come under point rationing, it is true, but a pound of beans, or 2 cups, counts only 8 points, and is enough for a good main dish for 6 persons. That would be 3 dinners for 2 persons, of course. Once cooked, you can keep the beans you don't use the first time in the refrigerator, and serve several different dishes from them. The cooked beans and peas are all ready to go into a loaf, or to make bean or pea soup, bean or pea croquettes. Some of the loaves and croquettes made with various kinds of beans are very much on the order of meat loaves and patties.

Of course dried beans, peas, and soybeans take overnight soaking and long, slow cooking, to make them tender. But couldn't you soak these foods on a Saturday night, and let them simmer a number of hours on Sunday, when you are at home? Keep what you don't eat on Sunday, to make meals easy through the week.

Well, there you have several ideas from the home economists for managing meals for 2 people in wartime, when both are out working during the day... meals that are tasty and easy to prepare.

